

1 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mayor Don Rae.

2 MR. RAE: Thank you. My name is Don Rae. I'm here
3 from Pinetop Lakeside. We're an adjacent community to the White
4 Mountain Apache Tribe, who operates a casino in our area talking
5 about the regional impacts that relate to us and the Fort Apache
6 Indian Reservation. The tribes' participation of \$30,000.00 a
7 year in the White Mountain Partnership advertising, promoting the
8 area as a tourism destination has helped weave a close-knit
9 relationship between the town of Pinetop Lakeside, the City of
10 Showlow and the tribe. It has also allowed the participating
11 entities additional advertising mechanisms benefitting all
12 involved.

13 The tribe's payroll has the economic benefit to the
14 communities due to the tribal members purchasing goods and
15 supplies not readily available on the reservation. The tribe has
16 established an RV park and a good number of retirees filling
17 these spaces and patronize businesses in the Pinetop
18 Lakeside/Showlow communities is also a benefit to the area.

19 There has been a substantial increase in the motel
20 rooms in Pinetop Lakeside and Hondah and though overall occupancy
21 is down in both locations, the increase in rooms benefits
22 everyone in the region and becomes a destination and tourism
23 place. The casino is a prominent sponsor of several special
24 events in Pinetop Lakeside. However, some type of state impact
25 fees may be necessary in the near future to compensate
26 neighboring communities if they are financial impacts in the
27 future.

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1 The casino has funded a \$5.2 million new chair lift
2 at Sunrise Ski Resort, putting Sunrise in a more equal level with
3 other ski resorts in helping to increase winter visitation to the
4 town of Pinetop Lakeside and surrounding communities. There are
5 some negatives, however. We experience traffic congestions due
6 to the number of vehicles utilizing the highway through our town.
7 The casino, I think the casino has taken it upon themselves to
8 legalize the age of 21 instead of 18, which was legal under the
9 compact which is a positive for us, I think.

10 The chief of police in our town has noticed an
11 increase in crime in Pinetop Lakeside area in the last couple of
12 years in most categories. Whether this is specifically related
13 to the casino's opening or the increase of traffic and visitor
14 population we cannot determine this. I appreciate you listening
15 to our comments. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you. I'm not sure our
17 final person is here. Stanley Bergstein? If not, that does end
18 our public comment period. I want to thank each and every one of
19 you who took time to come here and make your views heard before
20 this Commission.

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